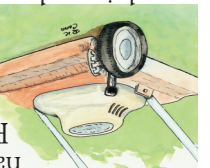


The Natural Solution



Rain Gardens are only one part of a low environmental impact lifestyle. Prince George's County offers many programs to educate and inform residents about ways to help protect the environment and the quality of our water. The County provides information about smart lawn care, recycling, and caring for your car without harming the environment. Residents can get involved in the Stream Teams Program by adopting a local stream, by planting a Rain Garden or doing other environmental activities in your neighborhood. Call (301) 883-5822 to learn more about Stream Teams. For information on recycling hazardous wastes, such as paint and motor oil, call (301) 883-5045. By using all of these programs, we are treading lightly on our environment.



grasses, flowers and trees, and can be personalized to create a unique look.



Want to attract monarch butterflies? Plant provide natural habitats for birds and insects.

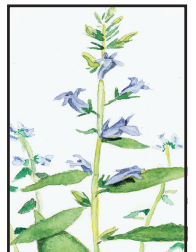


What Can I do?

What Can I do?

As a homeowner, you can do a lot to reduce stormwater pollution. The County has pamphlets on Lawn Care and Car Care that can help you. Converting part of your lawn into a meadow, perennial garden or tree and shrub bed will help capture runoff. Using rain barrels to water your garden recycles runoff while it saves you money. You can even install your own Rain Garden and turn a problem wet-spot into a garden showpiece.

If you are a new homeowner, the builder may have installed a Rain Garden for you. You will find it easy to maintain. Once the plants become established, all you need to do is weed occasionally and replace the mulch once or twice a year. If your community has Rain Gardens in the common area, the Homeowner's Association will maintain them. While your role is to be responsible for the care of your Garden, your reward is enjoying the beauty of this natural setting and a cleaner, healthier environment.



For further information contact:

Programs and Planning Division
9400 Peppercorn Place, Suite 610
Largo, Maryland 20774

(301) 883-5832 • TDD (301) 985-3894



Wayne K. Curry
County Executive



Rain . . . it's nature's way of nourishing our world and replenishing our water sources. Many of our daily activities, from washing cars to fertilizing lawns, can turn this precious resource into an environmental problem. The flow of water created by a rainstorm — stormwater runoff — can be polluted by oil, chemicals, pesticides, and sediments built up on our lawns, driveways, streets, and parking lots as a result of our daily activities. Rain washes these pollutants into storm drains, and, ultimately, into local streams and rivers.



The Prince George's County Department of Environmental Resources has developed an innovative and environmentally sensitive approach to reducing stormwater pollution. Rain Gardens are a natural solution to the challenge of protecting our water quality, providing many benefits to the homeowner and the environment.

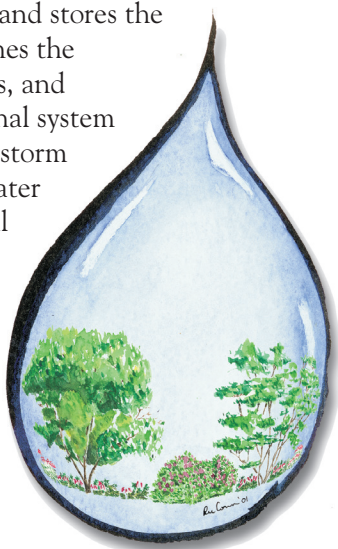
A Beneficial System

A neighborhood planted with Rain Gardens receives many benefits. Each home has a beautifully landscaped area, adding to the look of the overall community and increasing home values. Rain Gardens also protect the environment by providing shade and wind breaks, and absorbing noise. And, because they are in your yard, less mowing is required. Rain Gardens are cost-effective, too. They require little maintenance and reduce the need for other costly stormwater systems. These savings are passed on to you, the homeowner. Rain Gardens can also serve as

educational tools for you and your children. Plants can be added to attract hummingbirds or butterflies — you can have a nature center right in your own yard!

What Is A Rain Garden?

Rain Gardens use the concept of bioretention, a water quality practice in which plants, soils and soil dwelling organisms remove pollutants from stormwater. Rain Gardens are created in low-lying areas, with sands and organic mulch. These layers naturally filter the rain as it runs into the Rain Garden. During the next few days, the soil absorbs and stores the rainwater and nourishes the Garden's grasses, trees, and flowers. The traditional system of curbs, gutters, and storm drains carries stormwater runoff directly to local streams and rivers. Rain Gardens filter and reuse this water, reducing stormwater pollution and recharging groundwater.

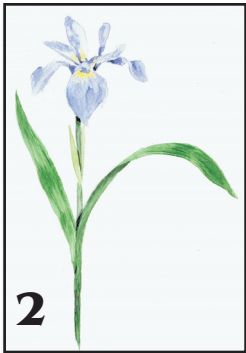


A community with a low impact on the environment combines several components to provide a development that is environmentally sensitive, as well as naturally beautiful. A hiker/biker trail encircles the neighborhood, crossing through the wooded areas surrounding the houses. Rain Gardens offer a filter for stormwater, as well as attractive landscaping in each yard. A stream and the surrounding wetland buffer are also preserved, maintaining a natural habitat for aquatic wildlife.

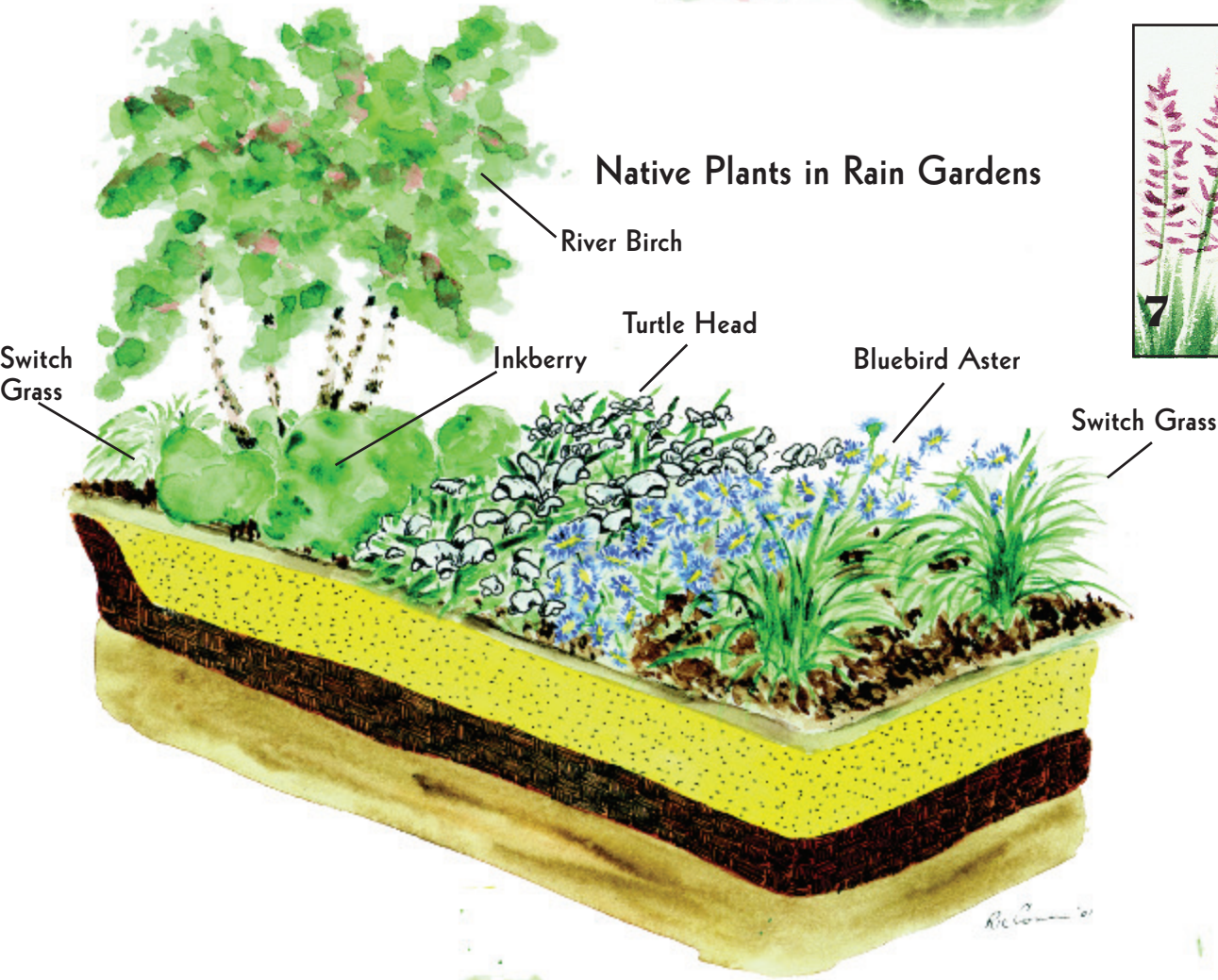
Rain Gardens:



In nature, specific kinds of plants live where the environment is most suitable for their healthy growth — cactus in hot, dry deserts, alpine plants at high altitudes; salt grasses in the marshes that border our oceans; and wetland plants where there is abundance of moisture readily available from the soil. Bioretention is most effective when planners choose plants that can tolerate changing moisture levels. For this project, plants known to thrive in low-lying places in our region will be used. They include a variety of grasses and other ground covers that will spread over the Rain Garden area; flowering plants including Blue Flag Iris, add colors during the spring and summer months, and trees such as Red Maples, provide shade and a splash of fall splendor.



Native Plants in Rain Gardens



1. Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)
2. Blue Flag (*Iris versicolor*)
3. Turk's Cap Lily (*Lilium superbum*)
4. Obedient Plant (*Physostegia virginiana*)
5. Wild Stonecrop (*Sedum ternatum*)
6. Tufted Hairgrass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*)
7. Redtop (*Tridens flavus*)

